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ABSTRACT

Results are reported from a survey of a random sample of college-bound high school seniors, 1974-75, who took the Scholastic Aptitude Test in the 12 states that comprise the College Board's Western Region. The 935 respondents are grouped for analytic purposes according to their college enrollment history. The four categories of respondents are continuing students, two-year/four-year transfers, other transfers, and dropouts. Institutional and personal variables related to retention and attrition are identified and discussed. Results are compared with those from more extensive studies. (Author/SW)

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# WHAT REALLY HAPPENED TO THE CLASS OF '75?

A

COLLEGE EXPERIENCE SURVEY

Conducted for the Executive Committee of the
College Board Western Regional Assembly

by

Educational Testing Service
Berkeley Office

June 1978

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U.S. DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH, EDUCATION & WELFARE
NATIONAL INSTITUTE OF EDUCATION

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# PREFACE

Here is a report on the retention in college of students from the West who took the SAT while in high school and graduated in 1975. The report stems from a 1977 survey of college experiences conducted for the College Board by the Berkeley Office of Educational Testing Service (ETS).

This report has its origins in the formation of the College Board's regional assemblies in 1974. In that year the Board's Trustees delegated responsibilities to the Western Assembly and to its two divisions--Financial Aid and Admissions and Guidance--and to their standing committees.

The newly established Admissions and Guidance Committee was eager, in planning the work of its division, to be responsive to the member representatives, who were canvassed about their interest and needs. Attrition and retention were prominent among them. As a result, a study of attrition and retention among college-bound students from the West was proposed by the Committee. The study was funded by the College Board and conducted by ETS.

All such projects are overseen and usually, as in this case, partly conducted by a subcommittee of member representatives elected to the Executive Committee. In the case of the College Experience Survey, it was a committee of one, Richard A. "Buzz" Yocum of Willamette University. Buzz Yocum had completed his term on the Executive Committee before the survey was completed, but his sustained interest was important to the survey's completion as well as to its initiation. Staff support for the project was provided by J. Quentin Jones from the Denver office.

Additional copies of the enclosed report are available both from the Denver office and from Ned Tibby, who is one of the authors. Comments, inquiries, and suggestions about this and other work of the College Board are always welcome.

Sam A. McCandless
Director
College Board Western Regional Office

June 1, 1978

## ABSTRACT

Results are reported from a survey of a random sample of college-bound high school seniors, 1974-75, who took the Scholastic Aptitude Test in the 12 states which comprise the College Board's Western Region. The 935 respondents are grouped for analytic purposes according to their college enrollment history. Institutional and personal variables related to retention and attrition are identified and discussed. Results are compared with those from more extensive studies.

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## PURPOSES

The general purposes of the College Experience Survey were two in number: first, to identify student and institutional variables which are related to retention and attrition; and second, to describe a range of a sample of the students attending the colleges and universities which constitute the higher educational component of the College Board's Western Regional Assembly.

## METHODOLOGY

A convenient way to survey the students we wished to study was to access them through records on file at the Educational Testing Service in Princeton, New Jersey. The decision to utilize these records meant that we would only be surveying students who took the SAT. We recognized the fact that not all College Board member institutions of higher education require that their entering students submit SAT scores; so the survey is somewhat limited. This, of course, renders the findings less meaningful to some institutions, particularly the two-year colleges. Still, we found that a considerable number of our respondents had entered community colleges, so the bias appears to be less pronounced than might have been anticipated.

Budgetary considerations dictated that the survey be conducted on a relatively small sample. More than 175,000 Westerners take the SAT every year, nearly 140,000 of whom are seniors. We sent questionnaires to 2,000 of them, hoping to obtain responses from 1,000, which we did.

We attempted to assure that the sample represents a cross-section of SAT-takers. Educational Testing Service provided us with address labels for 2,000 randomly selected Western[1] high school students, all members of the graduating class of 1975, who had taken the SAT. In the late spring of 1977, two years after their

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[1] States comprising the Western Region of the College Board are: Alaska, Arizona, California, Colorado, Hawaii, Idaho, Montana, Nevada, Oregon, Utah, Washington and Wyoming.

presumed graduation from high school, they received from ETS-Berkeley a 64-item questionnaire--dubbed by us the College Experience Survey [1]--along with a stamped, return envelope and a letter of explanation. Two weeks later, a second wave of questionnaires was sent to the same students asking all those who hadn't returned completed survey forms to please do so.

Nearly 1,000 completed questionnaires were returned. Of these, 935 were usable. Our effective response rate was 47 percent. It appears, from the diversity of responses, the range of colleges attended by the respondents, and profiles on a number of key variables that the sample is reasonably representative of all SAT candidates in the College Board's Western Region, circa 1974-75.

## LIMITATIONS

We view the College Experience Survey as a snapshot, the focus of which is on the early college experiences of the group of young people who responded to our questionnaire. As with any snapshot, feelings of depth and continuity are missing.

While our study is essentially descriptive in nature, it does establish some possible cause-and-effect relationships which are certainly suggestive. Many, in our judgment, are worthy of further investigation, broadly as well as by individual institutions. Where we are aware of them, we will call attention to any of our findings which parallel those of other studies. The reader might note that a number of studies done between 1950 and 1975 on college attrition have recently been reviewed in the Review of Educational Research (Pantages and Creedon, 1978).

Several specific caveats are in order:

1. Our numbers are fairly small, as previously indicated. The sample represents less than one percent of the total group of Western high school seniors who took the SAT in 1974-75.

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[1] A facsimile of the College Experience Survey is in Appendix A.

One of our categories, the two-year/four-year transfers, is particularly small.

2. Our timing was less than ideal. In the interests of getting the much-delayed study into motion, we elected to try to make contact with students in the late spring of the second year after high school graduation. Our reasoning was that, given the diversity of college calendars, this might be the best time to reach them c/o their 1975 home addresses. We reasoned that college students are most likely to pass through their homes between mid-May and mid-June. This assumption may have been correct; our response rate was good for this kind of survey. What we failed to reckon with, though, was the fact that apparently a number of students enrolled in two-year colleges in the spring do not reach decisions about staying or transferring until some time during the summer. In attempting to gain time we may have sacrificed the timeliness of some data.

3. We had difficulty categorizing some students. In an era of increasing flexibility in much of higher education many students do not easily fit into the usual pigeon holes. They often seem to come under several classifications at once, or none--at least those which are simply defined. For instance, how does one differentiate between a dropout and a stopout? We had to make more than a few arbitrary decisions in assigning respondents to one of our four analytic categories. This, of course, is a common problem in much research about students who, like other homo sapiens, insist on behaving in divergent ways.

4. Finally, we must point out that the young people who participated in the survey are not broadly representative of their age cohort, or even of college-going students generally. It is a demonstrable fact that students who take the SAT are, as a body, an academically impressive group. Nationally, those high school seniors who take the SAT each year represent about two-thirds of all graduates who go to college; three-fourths of them are in the top two-fifths of their graduating classes; their latest grade average in six academic subject areas was 3.11. The quality of the respondents to this survey is comparable.

## DESCRIPTION OF RESPONDENT GROUP

We dubbed our "typical" respondent Alice Average. Alice is a 20-year-old Caucasian female who entered a state college the fall term after high school graduation. Alice has attended only one college, has never transferred and is primarily there "to further her education," although career goals are also important in her decision-making hierarchy. Her intended major is business or possibly social sciences or humanities.

Alice graduated from a suburban high school with a graduating class of between 250-499 students. Her final CPA was above 3.5 but she was probably unable to recall her SAT/ACT results. If she did remember her SAT scores, they were in the 500-599 range for both the verbal and math sections. She entered college at age 18 and has been enrolled between 15 and 21 months in her first choice college, which has an enrollment of over 15,000 students.

Alice has done well in college, carrying between 13 and 17 units a term while maintaining a 3.0 to 3.4 GPA. She lives at home and works between 10 and 19 hours-per-week. She is probably not receiving financial aid. Her family is strongly supportive of her educational plans.

Alice considers herself average in reading, writing and math skills, compared to most students. She does, though, consider herself to be somewhat deficient in study skills, self-discipline and efficient use of time. She would be unlikely to drop out of college for any reason but she would consider transferring for a better program in her major field or if her institution did not offer a desired major. In May, 1977, Alice was a sophomore and planned to complete her degree at her current institution.

This profile of Alice Average represents an effort to humanize the central mass of data from which our sample was randomly drawn. What it lacks, of course, is a sense of the diversity and breadth of the total group. Some of this will emerge from the tables which follow. This centrist data should serve only as a reference point.

## THE FOUR ANALYTIC RESPONDENT GROUPS

In most tables, respondents have been separated into four categories: continuing students, two-year/four-year transfers, other transfers and dropouts. Following are descriptions of each of these groups:

1. Continuing Students (N=677; 72 percent of total group)

   These are students who were still enrolled in the first colleges they attended. This group included a good number of two-year college students who did not indicate definite intentions to transfer to a four-year college the next term, at least at the time they were surveyed--presumably the end of their second year. It is possible that some did, in fact, transfer before fall. Undoubtedly, many of them will soon become two-year/four-year transfers.[1]

2. Two-Year/Four-Year Transfers (N=45; five percent of total group)

   As indicated, this smaller group will undoubtedly grow in number this year and next. It included 45 students who had already transferred plus three who clearly indicated their intention to transfer in the fall. While five of the group had stopped out, all 45 were in school at the time the survey was taken.

3. Other Transfers (N=114; 12 percent of total group)

   These students can be separated into four sub-categories:

   - Eighteen who had transferred from one two-year college to another.

   - Fifty-five who had transferred from public, four-year institutions.

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[1]Of the group of 677 students we classified as continuing students, 22 were not actually in college at the time they responded but since they indicated definite plans to return to the same colleges we included them in this category.

- Seventeen who had transferred from private, independent colleges.

- Eighteen who had transferred from private, church-related colleges.

4. Dropouts (N=99; 11 percent of total group)

Of the 99 respondents, 88 have never returned to school and gave no indication of intending to do so. Ten could perhaps best be classified as stopouts but since they expressed no clearly formulated plans to return we included them.

Two groups of respondents, in addition to the 935 whose responses we analyzed, are worthy of mention: First were 21 non-attendees--those who entered military service, those who entered the job market, those who indicated money problems, those who entered training programs and those who plead uncertainty. Second, there were a few who reported that they had already "graduated"--i.e., from non-collegiate secretarial, technical and automotive programs.

## DISCUSSION OF FINDINGS

Utilizing a versatile software program called the Statistical Package for the Social Sciences (SPSS), the ETS computer generated some 500 tables from the 64-item College Experience Survey questionnaire (see Appendix A). Thirteen tables containing data which were judged to be particularly relevant and illuminating, given the purposes of the project, were selected for presentation in this report.[1] They will serve as foci for our discussion of findings.

Who Responded to the College Experience Survey? (Table 1).

SEX

The response breakdown, by gender, indicates a mild sex bias in the data. In the College Board's Western Region in 1975 the sex ratio of SAT candidates was 51 percent female, 49 percent male. However,

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[1] A set of tables may be borrowed from the College Board Western Regional Office.

TABLE 1

Who Responded to the College Experience Survey?

| | Continuing Students | 2 yr. -4 yr. Transfers | Other Transfers | Dropouts | All Respondents |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Sex | | | | | |
| Female | 58% | 62% | 57% | 62% | 59% |
| Male | 42 | 38 | 43 | 38 | 41 |
| Age | | | | | |
| 19-20 | 97% | 93% | 97% | 98% | 97% |
| Race | | | | | |
| Caucasian | 78% | 82% | 84% | 78% | 79% |
| Asian | 12 | 9 | 10 | 7 | 11 |
| Chicano | 5 | 4 | 2 | 7 | 5 |
| Black | 3 | - | 3 | 5 | 3 |
| Other | 2 | 4 | 1 | 3 | 2 |
| Family Income | | | | | |
| Above Average | 33% | 33% | 34% | 25% | 32% |
| Average | 57 | 60 | 55 | 65 | 58 |
| Below Average | 10 | 7 | 12 | 10 | 10 |

the ratio of respondents to this survey was 59 percent female and 41 percent male. The eight percent discrepancy bothered us until we realized that the patterns of female and male responses were very similar. We will call attention to differences of more or less than five percent from our basic ratio.

AGE

Ninety-seven percent of our respondents were in the 19-20 age cohort at the time they completed the survey. Hence, the sample is highly traditional in terms of college-going and in no way representative of the growing number of older students who enter college each year.

ETHNICITY

While our numbers of minority returns were too small to permit analysis, their rate of return was in balance with the pool from which the sample was randomly drawn. In other words, the ethnic mix of respondents compared reasonably well with that of all Western SAT-takers:

| Ethnic Background | All Western SAT-Takers, 1974-75 | College Experience Survey Respondents |
|---|---|---|
| American Indian | 0.5% | 0.2% |
| Black | 6 | 3 |
| Mexican American | 5 | 5 |
| Oriental | 9 | 11 |
| White | 76 | 79 |
| Other | 4 | 2 |

ETHNIC DROPOUT RATES

A table not provided with this report revealed the following dropout rates, by ethnicity, among our sample: Asians, seven percent; Caucasians, ten percent; Chicanos, 15 percent; Blacks, 20 percent. While these percentages reflect small numbers, they are consistent with the findings of other studies.

INCOME

Two somewhat surprising findings emerged from the family income table. For one thing, the dropout rate did not seem to be particularly related to family income level. This is not compatible with other studies. Money and retention are usually related, though others have cautioned against the conclusion that family income is necessarily a determining factor in student withdrawals (Iffert, 1957). The other unexpected finding was that the family income level of community college transfers appeared to be no lower, perhaps even a little higher, than that of other types of students. This challenged

TABLE 2

High School Background of Respondents

| | Continuing Students | 2 yr. -4 yr. Transfers | Other Transfers | Dropouts | All Respondents |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Size of High School Graduating Class | | | | | |
| 500+ | 44% | 50% | 47% | 32% | 43% |
| <500 | 56 | 50 | 53 | 68 | 57 |
| Location | | | | | |
| Urban | 25% | 25% | 24% | 21% | 24% |
| Suburban | 54 | 56 | 53 | 50 | 53 |
| Small Town | 22 | 20 | 23 | 30 | 23 |
| State | | | | | |
| California | 72% | 80% | 65% | 67% | 71% |
| Oregon | 9 | 9 | 12 | 12 | 10 |
| Hawaii | 5 | 5 | 10 | 4 | 5 |
| Colorado | 5 | 2 | 4 | 4 | 5 |
| Washington | 5 | 2 | 6 | 5 | 5 |
| Other | 4 | 3 | 3 | 8 | 4 |

the widely held belief that money is the prime determinant in many decisions to start out at community college.

High School Background of Respondents (Table 2).

SCHOOL SIZE

Among our sample, a markedly higher proportion of dropouts came from small high schools. This corresponds with the findings of other studies, though this is an area of some debate among researchers at the moment (Pantages and Creedon, 1978).

LOCATION

Related to size of school is size of community. We found, along with others, that dropouts are more likely to occur among college students who come from small towns than those who come from suburban or urban environments. These findings suggest a particular socialization problem for rural young people who go "away to college."

STATE

As was expected, California students comprised a large share (71 percent) of the respondent group. Of the 137,000 high school seniors in the west taking the SAT that year, 78 percent were Californians. Oregonians were next, with ten percent of the sample, and nine percent of the total group. Hawaii (historically a high percentage SAT-taking state), Washington (conversely, a low per capita SAT-volume state, because of the Washington Pre-College Test), and Colorado each provided about five percent of the mix. Four percent of the respondents were distributed among the seven remaining states in the College Board Western Region (Alaska, Arizona, Idaho, Montana, Nevada, Utah and Wyoming). These proportions generally parallel those of the total SAT-taking group.

OUT-OF-STATE STUDENT MIGRATION

Other data, not presented here, showed an interesting pattern in out-of-state migration. Whereas six percent of the sample went out-of-region to college, only two percent went out-of-state-but-within-the-region. Apparently, if Western students go away to college they go way away to college. Emigration percentages, small as they are, were highest for California (two percent), the seven "other" states (two percent), and Hawaii (one percent).

WOMEN FROM SMALL SCHOOLS

Another interesting bit of data, from another table, revealed that 75 percent of the respondents going to college from the very smallest high schools (i.e., less than 100 graduates) were women.

Indicators of High School Achievement and Academic Aptitude (Table 3).

HIGH SCHOOL G. P. A.

In comparing high school grades of our survey respondents with those of all Western students who completed descriptive questionnaires when they registered for the SAT in 1974-75, we noted a significant discrepancy:

| HSGPA | All Western SAT-Takers, 1974-75 | College Experience Survey Respondents |
|---|---|---|
| 3.5+ | 46% | 35% |
| 3.0-3.4 | 38 | 33 |
| 2.9- | 16 | 32 |

A DISCREPANCY

The obvious differences in grade distributions are hard to explain, other than possibly as an artifact of differences in the instruments. Otherwise, we can only accept the data at face value, which tells us that our randomly selected sample got somewhat poorer grades in high school than the total sample from which they were drawn.

HIGHLIGHTS OF TABLE 3

Several things caught our attention in the self-reported high school grade distribution table:

- Among the group of persisters, almost 90 percent reported high school GPA's of 3.0 or better.
- Among dropouts, 35 percent reported high school GPA's of 3.5 or better, while 72 percent said they had 3.0's or better.
- Of the four categories, the dropouts had the lowest high school grades. This is not an uncommon finding.

GRADES AND DROPOUTS

The same data, tabulated in another way, told us that among students who reported HSGPA's of above 3.0, less than ten percent dropped out; while among those who had high school grade averages below 3.0, twice as many, 20 percent, dropped out.

SAT SCORES

Perhaps the most noteworthy fact is that 39 percent of the total respondent group couldn't remember their SAT scores. It was interesting to note that half again as many of the dropouts (62 percent) couldn't recall their SAT scores. (This suggests that one predictor of attrition might be the inability to recall one's test scores!) In any event, the lack of complete test data raises questions about the

## TABLE 3

Indicators of High School Achievement and Academic Aptitude

| | Continuing Students | 2 yr. -4 yr. Transfers | Other Transfers | Dropouts | All Respondents |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Grade point | | | | | |
| 3.5+ | 49% | 38% | 45% | 35% | 46% |
| 3.0-3.4 | 37 | 51 | 44 | 38 | 38 |
| <3.0 | 14 | 11 | 11 | 28 | 16 |
| SAT Verbal-for those who remember | | | | | |
| | N=419 | N=33 | N=74 | N=39 | N=565 |
| 600+ | 29% | 30% | 27% | 26% | 28% |
| 400-600 | 60 | 60 | 57 | 51 | 60 |
| <400 | 11 | 10 | 16 | 23 | 13 |
| % who don't remember or didn't respond | 38% | 36% | 35% | 61% | 39% |
| SAT Math-for those who remember | | | | | |
| | N=422 | N=33 | N=73 | N=42 | N=570 |
| 600+ | 43% | 27% | 42% | 26% | 42% |
| 400-600 | 52 | 67 | 49 | 55 | 53 |
| <400 | 5 | 6 | 8 | 19 | 7 |
| % who don't remember or didn't respond | 38% | 36% | 36% | 57% | 38% |

representativeness of data that reported SAT data which we do have.

SAT SCORES BY SEX

From other tables, we can report that our women reported better high school grades than our men, and that of those students who did report their SAT results, the men performed quite a bit better on the math section. These patterns are consistent with other studies and with the performance of all Western SAT-takers in 1975. For this large group, mean high school grade point averages for females and males were 3.22 and 3.14, respectively; mean SAT math scores for women and men were 449 and 504; mean verbal scores were 435 and 443, with men performing slightly better than women. Among our respondents, more men than women recalled their SAT scores.

Where They Went to College (Table 4).

FIRST CHOICE COLLEGE

It was interesting to us that two-year/four-year college transfers entered their first choice college less often than the other categories of students, even dropouts. Almost four of every ten respondents who started in community colleges apparently would rather have gone elsewhere. We suppose this reflects the age-old determination to "get away from home" as much as anything else. It was not surprising that the continuing students indicated the highest level of satisfaction with their initial college choice.

TYPE OF COLLEGE FIRST ATTENDED

Of every ten respondents, eight first enrolled in a public institution of higher education--five of them in four-year schools and three in two-year colleges. Two entered the private sector--one enrolling in what we classified as a private, independent college, the other going to a private, church-related college.

ODDS AND ENDS

Our tabulations indicated a much higher dropout rate among students who attended two-year colleges. Other data, not shown, indicated that, among four-year colleges, the private, church-related schools had the highest transfer rate. Other data also showed a disproportionate number of men attending independent colleges and a disproportionate number of women attending church-related colleges.

SIZE OF COLLEGE

Forty percent of the sample attended institutions with student bodies of more than 15,000. This is substantially more than Astin (1975b) found in a national study. Two explanations seem logical; first, the presence of so many king-size colleges in California, where most

TABLE 4

Institutional Factors

| | Continuing Students | 2 yr. -4 yr. Transfers | Other Transfers | Dropouts | All Respondents |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Enrollment in 1st choice college | 84% | 62% | 79% | 69% | 81% |
| Type of institution first attended | | | | | |
| Public, 2 year | 29% | 100% | 17% | 53% | 33% |
| Public, 4 year | 50 | - | 51 | 33 | 46 |
| Private, independent | 12 | - | 16 | 6 | 11 |
| Church related | 9 | - | 17 | 8 | 10 |
| Size of institution | | | | | |
| ⟨800 students | 4% | - | 7% | 4% | 4% |
| 800-2,000 | 11 | 19% | 17 | 25 | 13 |
| 2,000-5,000 | 16 | 17 | 21 | 22 | 17 |
| 5,000-15,000 | 26 | 33 | 21 | 23 | 26 |
| ⟩15,000 | 43 | 31 | 36 | 26 | 40 |

everything is out-of-scale; and, secondly, the comparative dearth of small, independent colleges in the West.

DROPOUT RATE AND COLLEGE SIZE

Among our sample, the dropout rate was highest for smaller colleges and lowest among larger institutions. This would seem to challenge the popular myth which says that the smaller the college the greater its holding power. Even more damaging to this misconception were the findings of Astin (1975b). In a national longitudinal study conducted between 1968 and 1972, a direct inverse relationship between college size and rate of attrition was found--that is, the larger the institution, the higher the retention rate. It should be noted that Astin's findings, as well as ours, are presented in terms of percentages, not absolute numbers, and also that other recent studies do provide conflicting evidence (Pantages and Creedon, 1978).

Reasons for Attending College (Table 5).

WHY THEY WENT TO COLLEGE

Table 5 represents a summarization of responses to several different free-response questions included in the survey which we attempted to codify into classes of answers. The reasons our respondents indicated for deciding to go to college seemed fairly standard and generally non-specific. Almost half made a general statement about "wishing to further their education" as their primary reason for going to college; another 37 percent indicated this as a secondary reason. Career- and money-related reasons were also prominently mentioned. But we had the feeling that something else was being hinted at. Perhaps one Princeton male sophomore summarized it best when he answered, "What else was I going to do?" This would seem to support the often unspoken, "buying time" function of higher education, as well as the "It's expected of me" motive for going to college.

PRESSURE TO GO TO COLLEGE

An analysis of students who indicated "pressure to go to college" as their answer to a free response item about reasons for electing college yielded some interesting variations in patterns between dropouts and non-dropouts. Dropouts gave this as a reason for going to college much more frequently than other students--14 percent giving it as their primary reason and 25 percent as their secondary reason, compared to five and ten percent, respectively, for the persisting students.

SEX ROLES

Generally, men and women gave similar reasons for going to college although eight percent more women gave specific career goals as their primary reasons.

TABLE 5

Primary and Secondary Reasons Students Went to College
-- by Respondent Type

| | Continuing Students | | 2 yr. -4 yr. Transfers | | Other Transfers | | Dropouts | | All Respondents | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | Main Reason | Other Reason | Main Reason | Other Reason | Main Reason | Other Reason | Main Reason | Other Reason | Main Reason | Other Reason |
| N = | 661 | 427 | 44 | 27 | 113 | 79 | 98 | 61 | 916 | 594 |
| To further education | 49% | 33% | 52% | 41% | 49% | 30% | 45% | 26% | 49% | 37% |
| Career goals | 19 | 6 | 21 | 11 | 17 | 9 | 15 | 7 | 19 | 7 |
| Grads get jobs, money | 20 | 18 | 23 | 22 | 14 | 24 | 7 | 12 | 18 | 18 |
| Pressure to go | 5 | 10 | 2 | 7 | 6 | 8 | 14 | 25 | 6 | 11 |
| To fill a vacuum | 3 | 9 | - | 11 | 7 | 8 | 8 | 12 | 4 | 9 |
| Social or athletic factors | 1 | 8 | - | - | - | 9 | 2 | 8 | 1 | 8 |
| Other reasons | 4 | 10 | 2 | 7 | 3 | 13 | 10 | 12 | 4 | 11 |

Major Fields by Respondent Type and Sex (Table 6).

TABLE 6 DATA NOT COMPLETE

The compulsive reader will notice that this table, unlike the rest, includes numbers of respondents at the top of each column. This was done to call attention to the fact that some of the early questionnaires inadvertently did not include the item which generated this table. The omission was soon rectified, but responses to this question are missing for 290 students, or 31 percent of the sample.

MOST POPULAR MAJORS

The most common selection among the major field options was the ever-popular "Other." Otherwise, the highest percentages are to be found in Business, Social Sciences, Humanities and Biological Sciences, in that order. The "Other" category grouped students in combined or specifically job-targeted "new" majors (e.g., architecture/environmental studies) with those in the traditional occupationally oriented fields (e.g., nursing, the various medical technologies).

MAJORS AND SEX

Engineering still is male dominated; Education still is female dominated; but a surprising breakthrough occurred in Mathematics, where, although the number was small, more women than men were enrolled.

MAJORS AND TRANSFER RATES

On another table, not presented in this report, we noted the lowest transfer rate among Math and Science majors--as a matter of fact, we counted no transfers among our Math majors. Humanities majors were the most restless, their transfer rate running at 24 percent.

MAJORS AND DROPOUT RATES

We found dropout rates highest among students who indicated Business or "Other" as their major. This is generally consistent with Astin's research, which found dropout rates highest among Secretarial, Forestry, Electronics and Nursing majors. Our study also corroborated Astin's findings of dropout rates being lowest among Science majors, particularly those in four-year colleges (Astin, 1975).

Academic Achievement in College (Table 7).

TAKING THE SAT A PREDICTOR VARIABLE?

We were struck by the noticeably higher grade point averages of the two-year/four-year transfer students. We aren't sure what this means. It may simply reflect less rigorous grading standards in the two-year colleges. On the other hand, we are inclined to think that this data might be suggestive of an "eager beaver" syndrome. We suspect that, for some students, just taking the SAT could be a success-predictive variable. Ordinarily, students going to community

TABLE 6

Major Field by Respondent Type and Sex

| | Respondent Type | | | | Sex | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | Continuing | 2 yr-4 yr Transfer | Other Transfer | Dropout | Female | Male | All Respondents |
| | N=497 | N=34 | N=79 | N=67 | N=402 | N=274 | N=677 |
| Biological Science | 12% | 9% | 10% | 3% | 9% | 13% | 10% |
| Physical Science | 3 | - | 3 | 2 | 2 | 4 | 3 |
| Mathematics | 4 | - | - | 2 | 4 | 3 | 3 |
| Engineering | 7 | 9 | 9 | 11 | 2 | 16 | 7 |
| Business | 16 | 18 | 9 | 21 | 15 | 18 | 16 |
| Social Science | 14 | 27 | 10 | 10 | 14 | 14 | 14 |
| Humanities | 11 | 6 | 22 | 10 | 14 | 8 | 12 |
| Education | 6 | 6 | 6 | 8 | 9 | 2 | 6 |
| Other | 28 | 27 | 32 | 34 | 33 | 23 | 29 |

TABLE 7

Academic Achievement in College

| | Continuing Students | 2 yr.-4 yr. Transfers | Other Transfers | Dropouts | All Respondents |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| **Grade point** | | | | | |
| 3.5+ | 25% | 47% | 22% | 10% | 24% |
| 3.0-3.4 | 38 | 35 | 35 | 30 | 37 |
| 2.5-2.9 | 27 | 14 | 21 | 44 | 27 |
| 2.0-2.4 | 10 | 5 | 16 | 10 | 10 |
| <2.0 | 1 | - | 6 | 7 | 2 |
| **Unit load carried** | | | | | |
| 18+ semester units | 16% | 12% | 12% | 9% | 14% |
| 13-17 units | 70 | 62 | 67 | 54 | 68 |
| 7-12 units | 12 | 19 | 17 | 29 | 14 |
| 1-6 units | 3 | 7 | 3 | 8 | 4 |

college are not required to take the SAT. Some students, of course, experience changes of plans. Too, in some affluent high schools taking the SAT is virtually obligatory. Nonetheless, the evidence suggests that many community college-bound students take the SAT without any absolute or implied requirement being exacted of them. Why? For some, taking the SAT may be an affirmation of their intent to ultimately earn their baccalaureate degrees. In any event, this was an additional piece of information which called our attention to the two-year/four-year transfers. As a group, they manifested some striking characteristics.

GRADES OF DROPOUTS

The grade patterns of dropouts were also revealing. Among the 99 self-reported dropouts, 40 percent said they had attained 3.0 GPA's or better. Furthermore, 93 percent said they had at least a 2.0 average. Obviously, grades were not their problem.

GRADE SPREAD

Our respondents' self-reported college grades showed an evenly distributed curve. However, the curve was rather tightly constricted between 2.5 and 4.0. Only two percent of the sample reported GPA's of less than 2.0! Apparently, grade inflation is still a reality in Western colleges (as well as in the high schools).

UNIT LOADS

It may be significant that our dropouts tended to carry fewer units prior to leaving than persisters--only 63 percent of our dropouts carried 13 or more units, compared to 86 percent of the continuers.

GRADES, LOADS AND SEX

Other tables revealed that our women received better grades than our men but that the men carries heavier loads.

Self-Assessment of Academic Skills (Table 8).

THE THREE R'S

Granted that our respondent group is above average, we were nonetheless startled when all but six percent rated themselves average or above in reading and writing skills and all but 14 percent rated themselves average or above in math skills.

2-4 YEAR TRANSFERS AND BASIC SKILLS

Another mild surprise: looking a little more closely at the table, we saw that the two-year/four-year transfers rated themselves most highly of all in the three basic skills, despite their generally lower reported SAT scores. Perhaps their high grades (see Table 7) were based on more than different standards. At least, their self-perceptions are consistent with their grades.

TABLE 8

Self-Assessment of Academic Skills

| | Continuing | 2 yr.-4 yr. Transfers | Other Transfers | Dropout | All Respondents |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Academic skills | | | | | |
| Above average | 46% | 50% | 39% | 37% | 45% |
| Average | 48 | 41 | 57 | 56 | 50 |
| Below average | 6 | 10 | 4 | 7 | 6 |
| Writing skills | | | | | |
| Above average | 44% | 45% | 44% | 38% | 43% |
| Average | 50 | 48 | 52 | 58 | 51 |
| Below average | 6 | 7 | 5 | 4 | 6 |
| Math skills | | | | | |
| Above average | 40% | 43% | 37% | 27% | 38% |
| Average | 47 | 45 | 52 | 57 | 48 |
| Below average | 14 | 12 | 11 | 17 | 14 |
| Study Skill Deficiencies | | | | | |
| Self discipline | 44% | 47% | 43% | 53% | 45% |
| Efficient use of time | 45 | 33 | 38 | 46 | 44 |
| Preparation for exams | 26 | 31 | 27 | 27 | 27 |
| Efficient use of library | 22 | 36 | 24 | 24 | 23 |
| Note taking | 13 | 16 | 18 | 16 | 15 |

Even the dropouts, while judging their basic skills somewhat less highly than the persisters, indicated few problems. Of our dropouts, only four percent felt they were below average in writing skills, only seven percent felt they were below average in reading, and 17 percent felt their math skills were less than average.

A DIFFERENCE OF OPINION

All of this was disquieting considering the concern in higher education about declining competencies of college students in the basic skills, particularly in writing. We may not have asked the questions properly. Or it may be that our respondents have low opinions of their fellow students. On the other hand, we may have unearthed something of significance. It may be that students just don't recognize a major problem. If this is true, this may be part of the problem. In any event, the matter of student perception of the writing controversy bears further inquiry.

BASIC SKILLS AND SEX

As an aside, other data indicated that our men and women rated themselves about the same (all good) in reading and writing but the men felt more competent in math. Despite the fact that more women seem to be venturing into math as a major (see Table 6), the math bogeyman apparently still lurks in the minds of many women.

STUDY SKILLS PARADOX

An interesting paradox emerged as we turned to the bottom part of Table 8. Cognizant of how smugly our group of respondents rated themselves in terms of their mastery of the three R's, we were thus confused at how many of them reported problems in study skills--especially self-discipline and efficient use of time. One could argue that these students see themselves having greater problems in mastering themselves than in mastering the basic academic skills.

DROPOUTS AND STUDY SKILLS

Checking on the dropouts, we note that their self-evaluations of study skill deficiencies are generally similar to those of the non-dropouts, although the dropouts rated themselves somewhat poorer in self-discipline and use of time.

2/4 YEAR TRANSFERS AND LIBRARY SKILLS

One prominent divergence was the concern clearly shown by the two-year/four-year transfers about library usage skills. This might suggest that the community colleges are overlooking this. It certainly does alert the four-year colleges that library orientation for lower division transfers might be helpful.

Personal Circumstances (Table 9).

RESIDENCE

Forty-one percent of our continuing students lived at home, which is consistent with the fact that almost 80 percent of the total sample were attending public institutions, including community colleges. It seemed particularly significant that a disproportionately larger percentage of the dropouts lived at home. This agrees with findings reported by Arthur Chickering (c. 1974) in a study of commuting students.

2/4 YEAR TRANSFERS AND WORK

Again, we were impressed with the two-year/four-year transfers. Only 12 percent of this rather remarkable group reported that they did not work while in college; indeed, 56 percent of them said they worked over 20 hours per week. Recalling that 82 percent of the two-year/four-year transfers reported GPA's of 3.0 and above, and 74 percent that they carried 13 or more units, we may speculate that: a) they are, as a group, highly motivated; b) they may not be challenged by the two-year colleges; c) community colleges grades may be even more inflated than those of the senior colleges; d) all of the above; and/or e) none of the above. In any event, as we have said, as a group they are worthy of further study.

WORK AND SEX

Other tables revealed that our men worked more than our women. Seventy-eight percent of those working 30 hours or more per week were men. Remember, too, that the men tended to carry heavier class loads, but also to get lower grades, than the women.

DROPOUTS AND WORK

As usual, our dropouts marched to a different drummer. In this case, we observed that an inordinately high percentage of them (27 percent) were working more than 30 hours per week.

ASTIN'S FINDINGS RE/WORK

Astin's (1975b) findings are relevant. He also found that male students work more. He found, too, that working full-time (25 hours or more per week, by his definition) had a negative relation to college survival. Generally, he found the relationship between work and study to be complex. Working could be a good or a bad thing, depending upon a number of factors, such as: the type of job (some good, some bad); whether the work was done on-campus (good) or off campus (not so good); if the job came under the auspices of the Work Study Program (good); and the relationship of the job to one's career goals (good).

TABLE 9

Personal Circumstances

| | Continuing | 2 yr.-4 yr. Transfers | Other Transfers | Dropouts | All Respondents |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Residence | | | | | |
| Parent's home | 41% | 81% | 32% | 54% | 43% |
| Dormitory | 28 | 2 | 53 | 20 | 20 |
| Own apartment | 22 | 7 | 12 | 15 | 15 |
| Other | 9 | 10 | 4 | 12 | 5 |
| Hours worked per week | | | | | |
| None | 39% | 12% | 47% | 34% | 38% |
| ‹10 hours/week | 12 | 9 | 13 | 9 | 12 |
| 10-19 hours | 25 | 23 | 21 | 17 | 23 |
| 20-29 hours | 15 | 40 | 12 | 13 | 16 |
| ›30 hours | 9 | 16 | 7 | 27 | 11 |
| Parental support/sympathy with educational plans | | | | | |
| Strongly supportive | 78% | 88% | 77% | 56% | 76% |
| Fairly supportive | 18 | 10 | 20 | 38 | 20 |
| Not supportive | 4 | 2 | 3 | 6 | 4 |

TABLE 10

Financial Aid Profile

| | Continuing Students | 2 yr-4 yr Transfers | Other Transfers | Dropouts | All Respondents |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Receive no aid | 59% | 64% | 54% | 65% | 60% |
| Receive aid of some kind: | 41% | 36% | 46% | 35% | 40% |
| State scholarship | 14 | 7 | 13 | 7 | 13 |
| Federal grant | 13 | 4 | 10 | 13 | 13 |
| College scholarship | 13 | 9 | 16 | 9 | 13 |
| Work study | 10 | 2 | 9 | 9 | 10 |
| Federal loan | 9 | 4 | 11 | 8 | 9 |

PARENTAL SUPPORT

Particularly telling was the relative lack of parental support for the educational aspirations of the dropouts as compared with the persisting students. Parental encouragement has often been shown to be a key determinant of college success. Still, in fairness to the older generation we must point out that 56 percent of our dropouts said their parents were strongly supportive of their educational plans--which suggests that parents are not the root of all evil (only 44 percent of it!).

Financial Aid Profile (Table 10).

FINANCIAL AID

Our financial aid inquiry yielded limited information and no surprises. Forty percent of our respondents were receiving some form of financial aid. There were no differences of note between any of our four categories of students.

ASTIN'S STUDY

Astin's (1975b) more comprehensive study produced some interesting, related findings which bear reporting. For example, he found that, as a rule, students on work-study were better bets to persist than students on other federally-based financial aid programs. He also found that students holding on-campus jobs tended to persist better than those who worked off-campus. This is consistent with evidence, from our study as well as others, that the more students are involved in on-campus activities (even jobs), the more apt they are to stay in school.

Primary and Secondary Reasons Students Transferred (Table 11).

REASONS GIVEN FOR TRANS-FERRING

Table 11 is a tabulation of responses to an open-ended pair of questions, "If you ever transferred, what was your main reason? Other reasons?" Arbitrarily, and with great difficulty, we squeezed 146 sets of answers into seven general response types. The two main reasons for changing colleges were: transferring to a four-year school (for community college students) and seeking a program not available at the first college. These are certainly logical and legitimate reasons. Geographic reasons and vague statements of dissatisfaction with the first college constituted most of the rest of the reasons given. Typically, transferring students who were not changing schools for academic reasons wanted to get away from home or to have a change of scene. Junior college transfers tended to liken the two-year colleges to high school or to feel they were simply "marking time." Not surprisingly, a combination of factors often led students to make

TABLE 11

Primary and Secondary Reasons Transfer Students Changed Schools

| | 2 yr.-4 yr. Transfers | | Other Transfers | | All Transfers | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | Main Reason | Other Reason | Main Reason | Other Reason | Main Reason | Other Reason |
| | N=45 | N=20 | N=101 | N=52 | N=146 | N=72 |
| Transfer to a 4 year school | 65% | 20% | 1% | - | 21% | 6% |
| Desired program not available | 11 | 25 | 33 | 25 | 26 | 25 |
| Geographic factors | 7 | 15 | 23 | 19 | 18 | 19 |
| Unspecified/general dissatisfaction with the first school | 4 | 20 | 21 | 21 | 16 | 18 |
| Financial reasons | 4 | 5 | 11 | 17 | 9 | 14 |
| Personal reasons | 2 | 5 | 4 | 10 | 3 | 9 |
| Other reasons | 7 | 10 | 7 | 8 | 7 | 9 |

a decision to change schools. A student who transferred to University of California at Santa Barbara after one year at a junior college wrote, "JC is fine for the first year, but after that it's just marking time. I wanted to get away to the college of my choice (which) is far away from home." Financial reasons were not frequently cited for transferring, which surprised us. Almost no one mentioned academic difficulties, which also surprised us. Men cited financial reasons for transferring more often than women, but women were more apt to offer general statements of dissatisfaction.

Primary and Secondary Reasons Students Dropped Out (Tables 12 and 13).

IS FLUNKING-OUT OUT?

Table 12, like Table 11, is also the end-product of an open-ended question. The startling highlight is that hardly anyone reported flunking out. Virtually all dropping out among this small group of relatively able students was voluntary. It is possible that some of the reasons given (personal, boredom, dissatisfaction) stemmed from lackluster academic showings. One student, for example, who merely stated that he or she was "unhappy" and therefore dropped out, reported high school and college GPA's between 2.5 and 2.9, yet indicated deficiencies in all study skills elsewhere in the questionnaire. Another student, who dropped out of an independent college in Washington, said he "hated the weather and (was) not into doing all the work (6 hours a day)." We have no way of knowing which factor was the most important for students like these. In any event, there is some evidence that academic disqualification may be becoming passe.

COMPARISONS WITH ASTIN

Astin's (1975b) national study, while somewhat dated and perhaps somewhat suspect because it charted students through the troubled, atypical years of 1968-1972, is nonetheless relevant. His dropouts of seven or so years ago looked much different than ours. He reported poor academic standing as the major reason for 22 percent of his dropouts. In several earlier longitudinal studies the median figure was 33 percent (Summerskill, 1962). We assume the differences between these larger, national studies and our limited regional study are primarily attributable to a combination of grade inflation in recent years and the self-selection factor (taking the SAT) peculiar to our sample. Following is a summary of Astin's (1975b) findings regarding "dropout proneness":

TABLE 12

Primary and Secondary Reasons Dropouts Left School

| | Dropouts | |
|---|---|---|
| | Main Reason | Other Reason |
| | N=95 | N=53 |
| Personal reasons | 20% | 19% |
| Financial reasons | 18 | 17 |
| Work priorities | 17 | 17 |
| Unspecified/general dissatisfaction with school | 14 | 17 |
| Boredom | 13 | 19 |
| Temporary break from school | 8 | - |
| Family reasons | 6 | 2 |
| Other reasons | 4 | 9 |

- He identified a number of characteristics of entering freshmen which he felt could be useful in estimating a given student's chances of dropping out. According to Astin, the most dropout prone freshmen are those with poor academic records in high school, low aspirations, poor study habits, relatively uneducated parents and small town backgrounds.

- Astin noted that dropping out is also associated with being older than most freshmen, having Protestant parents, having no current religious preference and being a cigarette smoker. He found that Black heavy smokers were particularly dropout prone.

- According to Astin, by far the best predictive factor is the student's past academic record and academic ability. Next in importance are the student's degree plans at time of college entrance, religious background, followed by worry about college finances, and educational attainment of parents. This pattern of predictors, he said, is generally consistent with patterns shown in earlier dropout studies.

- Conversely, the predictors which Astin found to be associated with low dropout proneness produce the opposite pattern. In addition, low dropout proneness was further associated with being either Jewish or Oriental, with winning varsity letters in high school, and with plans to go beyond the first college.

DROPOUTS BY SEX

Returning to our survey, other data showed proportionately more men than women giving the following reasons for dropping out: taking a temporary break (making them stopouts, at least in their own minds), financial reasons, and boredom. Our women more often cited work priorities, family reasons and general dissatisfaction.

ATTITUDE: A KEY?

By way of a postscript, we offer a poser which emerged from several tables which we have not presented. Toward the end of the questionnaire, we asked persisting students to choose from a list of possible reasons which ones could cause them to either transfer or drop out. Their responses are, of course, highly speculative, but they suggest possible key attitudinal differences between potential persisters and potential dropouts.

TABLE 13

Possible Reasons for Dropping Out: Speculations
by Currently Enrolled Students

| | Continuing Students | 2 yr.-4 yr. Transfers | Other Transfers | Dropouts | All Respondents |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | N=677 | N=45 | N=113 | N=10 | N=845 |
| Lack of money | 37% | 40% | 40% | 30% | 38% |
| Lack of interest | 32 | 27 | 33 | 20 | 31 |
| Poor health | 30 | 31 | 31 | 10 | 30 |
| Personal or family problems | 27 | 31 | 24 | 20 | 27 |
| Lack of progress toward career objective | 20 | 13 | 18 | 30 | 19 |
| Academic failure | 16 | 4 | 14 | 30 | 15 |
| Desired program not available | 4 | - | 10 | 10 | 5 |
| Another college having a better program in major field | 3 | 2 | 4 | - | 3 |
| To move closer to home | 2 | 2 | 3 | 10 | 2 |
| To move farther from home | 2 | - | 4 | 10 | 2 |
| Friends going to another school | - | - | - | - | - |

DIFFERENT SLANT ON TRANS-FERRING

When asked to identify possible reasons for transferring, those who had not dropped out tended to mention "desired program not available," "better program in my major field," or "lack of progress towards a career objective." On the other hand, those who had dropped out cited poor grades, personal problems, moving closer to home, and joining friends as more likely reasons for transferring. In other words, non-dropouts view transferring in relation to educational and career plans, while dropouts tend to see it in more personal terms.

ATTITUDE TOWARDS QUITTING

Even more pronounced differences occurred between persisters and dropouts in response to a question about real and possible causes for dropping out. (See Table 13.) Persisters viewed the decision to remain on, or leave, college primarily through pragmatic, career-related lenses. The reasons given by actual dropouts were usually personal in nature. They ranged from, "I got fed up not only with school and work but also with myself and my wastage of time" (from a student who left school to work full-time) to "It took me four months to recover from an auto accident" (from a student who apparently planned to return but hadn't).

POSSIBLE EARLY WARNING INDICATOR

The foregoing suggests that potential dropouts approach college with a different mental set. They tend to anticipate their college experience as primarily a means of personal fulfillment. Those who are likely to succeed, on the other hand, are apt to view college in terms of a step in attainment of a career goal, however vaguely defined. It could be hypothesized that the future dropout views college more as an end in itself rather than as a means to an end. Perhaps early identification of freshmen with such an orientation could help reduce attrition. We think it would be interesting to find out.

## SUMMARY

A limited study such as this one is not expected to provide firm conclusions. The best one can hope for are interpretable relationships which will provoke some serious thought and perhaps further investigation. These, then, are our main findings:

- The sample of 1974-75 SAT-takers was characterized by a certain self-confidence in their abilities, particularly in reading and writing. This runs contrary to the widespread

concern about deficiencies in the basic skills in American higher education today. We wonder: Are our respondents as capable as they think they are? Or are they oblivious to the problem?

- The pattern of majors showed an increasing concern about employment opportunities.

- The two-year/four-year transfers emerged as a unique subsample. They worked more hours and reported higher grades. They were only outscored by continuing four-year college students in number of units carried. It would be interesting to see how this striking group measures up in a few years. An intensive study focused solely on two/four year transfers could be helpful.

- The dropout rate was lowest among Asian Americans, highest among Black Americans.

- The dropout rate did not appear to be particularly related to family income level. This is not consistent with the findings of other studies.

- The dropout rate was higher among students from rural areas than for those from urban or suburban areas, suggesting special adjustment problems for rural students in college.

- The act of taking the SAT appears to be one predictor of persistence in college.

- High school grade averages for dropouts were somewhat lower than for other respondents.

- Almost three quarters of our dropouts reported high school grade averages of at least 3.0.

- Of our respondents attending two-year colleges, 40 percent said they would have preferred to have gone elsewhere.

- Generally, the larger the college, the lower the dropout rate.

- "Pressure to go to college" showed some relationship to dropping out.

- Academic disqualification appears to be almost a thing of the past; 93 percent of our dropouts reported college GPA's of 2.0 or better.

- Our dropouts carried lighter academic loads and worked more hours per week than the non-dropouts.

- The dropout rate was higher among students who lived at home.

- Parental support for students' educational plans was positively related to retention.

- The dropouts appeared to be less able, academically, and less career goal oriented than the persisters.

- Finally, there is evidence of a different attitudinal set towards the college experience between dropout-prone and persistence-prone students. Dropout-prone students seem to view the college experience less pragmatically and more emotionally than persistence-prone students.

## EPILOGUE

Studies like the College Experience Survey are enhanced in value if they spawn other, related efforts. One possibility would be to replicate it. It would be interesting to compare the Class of '75 with, say, the Class of '77. It would also be interesting to follow-up on the Class of '75 two years from now--after many will have finished four years of college. A comparative survey on a national scale, or in another region, could be instructive. The initiative for such undertakings should appropriately spring from the College Board's Western Regional membership. If you feel that this is one of those rare cases in educational research where more is better, we suggest that you make your feelings known, either through Board staff of a member of the Western Regional Executive Committee. Executive Committee members are listed in Appendix B.

Finally, if the College Experience Survey does nothing else, it can claim to have generated roughly 20 pounds of computer printout. This is valuable baseline data, available to any member college

comtemplating similar local research. The questionnaire (see Appendix A) can be copied or adapted. The computer program and card deck are also available and could be utilized at a fraction of the initial cost. Finally, advice and assistance are available from staff of the College Board and ETS regional offices in Palo Alto and Berkeley, respectively.

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APPENDIX A

# College Experience Survey

BACKGROUND INFORMATION
(To be answered by all)

1. What is your sex?

   1.___Female  2.___Male

2. How old are you?

   1.___Under 18  4.___20
   2.___18  5.___21
   3.___19  6.___Over 21

3. Which best describes you?

   1.___Afro-American/Black/Negro
   2.___American Indian
   3.___Asian-American/Oriental
   4.___Caucasian/White
   5.___Chicano/Mexican American/Spanish American
   6.___Other (specify)_____

4. How would you describe your family's financial status?

   1.___Above average  2.___Average
   3.___Below average

5. Have you ever been enrolled in a college or university?

   1.___Yes  2.___No (Skip to question 14)

6. What is your major field currently, or what was it prior to dropping out?

   _____

7. Have you at any time transferred from one college to another?

   1.___Yes  2.___No

8. Have you ever dropped out of college?

   1.___Yes, and I have never returned
   2.___Yes, but I have since returned to college
   3.___No, I've never dropped out

9. Did you enter college immediately (within 5 months) after graduating from high school?

   1.___Yes  2.___No

   Name of the college or university you first attended:

10, _____
11.

   Go on to questions 12 and 13...

IF YOU HAVE EVER ENROLLED IN COLLEGE:

What factors originally led you to attend college?

12. Main reason:_____

13. Other reason(s):_____

IF YOU HAVE NEVER ENROLLED IN COLLEGE:

14. Main reason:_____

15. Other reason(s):_____

## HIGH SCHOOL BACKGROUND

(To be answered by all)

16. Which best describes the location of your home during your high school years?

1. ___Urban (city-center area)
2. ___Suburban
3. ___Small town or rural

17, 18. In which state did you live during most of your high school years?

| | | |
|---|---|---|
| 1. ___Alaska | 5. ___Hawaii | 9. ___Oreg. |
| 2. ___Ariz. | 6. ___Idaho | 10. ___Utah |
| 3. ___Calif. | 7. ___Mont. | 11. ___Wash. |
| 4. ___Colo. | 8. ___Nevada | 12. ___Wyom. |

13. ___Other state
14. ___Foreign country

19. How many students were in your high school graduation class?

| | |
|---|---|
| 1. ___More than 700 | 4. ___100-249 |
| 2. ___500-699 | 5. ___Less than 100 |
| 3. ___250-499 | |

20. What was your final high school grade point average? (A=4.0, B=3.0, etc.)

| | |
|---|---|
| 1. ___3.5-4.0 | 4. ___2.0-2.4 |
| 2. ___3.0-3.4 | 5. ___Below 2.0 |
| 3. ___2.5-2.9 | |

What were your SAT and/or ACT scores?

| 21. SAT-Verbal | 22. SAT-Math | 23. ACT-Composite |
|---|---|---|
| 1. ___700-800 | ___700-800 | ___30-36 |
| 2. ___600-699 | ___600-699 | ___25-29 |
| 3. ___500-599 | ___500-599 | ___20-24 |
| 4. ___400-499 | ___400-499 | ___15-19 |
| 5. ___300-399 | ___300-399 | ___10-14 |
| 6. ___200-299 | ___200-299 | ___5 - 9 |
| 7. ___Can't Recall | ___Can't Recall | ___Can't Recall |

If you have never enrolled in a college or university, you do not need to continue. Please return the questionnaire in the envelope provided. Thank you for your time and your participation in this survey!

## COLLEGE EXPERIENCES

(To be answered by all who have attended a college or university at some time)

24. How old were you when you entered college?

| | | |
|---|---|---|
| 1. ___Under 16 | 3. ___17 | 5. ___19 |
| 2. ___16 | 4. ___18 | 6. ___Over 19 |

25. For roughly how many months altogether have you been enrolled (or were you enrolled)?

| | |
|---|---|
| 1. ___Less than 5 months | 4. ___16-21 months |
| 2. ___5-9 months | 5. ___22-27 months |
| 3. ___10-15 months | 6. ___28-32 months |
| | 7. ___Over 32 months |

26. Was the college you first enrolled in your first choice college?

1. ___Yes 2. ___No

27. How many different colleges or universities have you attended?

1. ___One 2. ___Two 3. ___Three or more

Answer the following questions in the appropriate column depending on whether you:

Col. 1—Are currently enrolled and have never transferred or dropped out

Col. 2—Have transferred at some time

Col. 3—Have dropped out at some time

(If you have transferred or dropped out several times, answer with reference to the first time.)

| | Currently ↓ | Prior to Transfer ↓ | Prior to Dropping Out ↓ |
|---|---|---|---|
| 28. TYPE OF COLLEGE OR UNIVERSITY | | | |
| Public, 2-year | ___ | ___ | ___ |
| Public, 4-year | ___ | ___ | ___ |
| Private, independ. | ___ | ___ | ___ |
| Private, church related | ___ | ___ | ___ |
| 29. SIZE OF COLLEGE OR UNIVERSITY | | | |
| Less than 800 students | ___ | ___ | ___ |
| 800-2,000 | ___ | ___ | ___ |
| 2,000-5,000 | ___ | ___ | ___ |
| 5,000-15,000 | ___ | ___ | ___ |
| Over 15,000 | ___ | ___ | ___ |

| | Currently | Prior to Transfer | Prior to Dropping Out |
|---|---|---|---|
| 30. GRADE POINT AVERAGE | ↓ | ↓ | ↓ |
| 3.5-4.0 | ___ | ___ | ___ |
| 3.0-3.4 | ___ | ___ | ___ |
| 2.5-2.9 | ___ | ___ | ___ |
| 2.0-2.4 | ___ | ___ | ___ |
| Below 2.0 | ___ | ___ | ___ |
| 31. UNIT LOAD CARRIED | | | |
| 18 or more semester units | ___ | ___ | ___ |
| 13-17 units | ___ | ___ | ___ |
| 7-12 units | ___ | ___ | ___ |
| 1-6 units | ___ | ___ | ___ |
| FINANCIAL AID (Check all that apply) | | | |
| 32. None | ___ | ___ | ___ |
| 33. State scholarship | ___ | ___ | ___ |
| 34. State loan | ___ | ___ | ___ |
| 35. Federal grant | ___ | ___ | ___ |
| 36. Federal loan | ___ | ___ | ___ |
| 37. Academic scholarship (from your college) | ___ | ___ | ___ |
| 38. College work study | ___ | ___ | ___ |
| 39. College loan | ___ | ___ | ___ |
| 40. Athletic scholarship | ___ | ___ | ___ |
| 41. Fee waiver | ___ | ___ | ___ |
| 42. Bank loan | ___ | ___ | ___ |
| 43. National Merit Scholarship | ___ | ___ | ___ |
| 44. Vet. Admin. dependents loan | ___ | ___ | ___ |
| 45. Other (specify)_____ | | | |
| 46. LIVING ARRANGEMENT | | | |
| Own apartment or home | ___ | ___ | ___ |
| Parent's home | ___ | ___ | ___ |
| Dormitory | ___ | ___ | ___ |
| Fraternity or sorority | ___ | ___ | ___ |
| With relatives | ___ | ___ | ___ |
| Other (specify) _____ | | | |

| | Currently | Prior to Transfer | Prior to Dropping Out |
|---|---|---|---|
| 47. HOURS PER WEEK WORKED FOR PAY | ↓ | ↓ | ↓ |
| Not working | ___ | ___ | ___ |
| Less than 10 hours | ___ | ___ | ___ |
| 10-19 hours | ___ | ___ | ___ |
| 20-29 hours | ___ | ___ | ___ |
| 30 or more hours | ___ | ___ | ___ |
| 48. PARENTS SUPPORTIVE, SYMPATHETIC WITH YOUR EDUCATIONAL PLANS | | | |
| Strongly supportive | ___ | ___ | ___ |
| Fairly supportive | ___ | ___ | ___ |
| Not supportive at all | ___ | ___ | ___ |
| STUDY SKILLS YOU FEEL YOU ARE DEFICIENT IN | | | |
| 49. Note taking | ___ | ___ | ___ |
| 50. Efficient use of library | ___ | ___ | ___ |
| 51. Efficient use of time | ___ | ___ | ___ |
| 52. Preparation for exams | ___ | ___ | ___ |
| 53. Self discipline | ___ | ___ | ___ |
| 54. Other (specify) _____ | | | |
| _____ | | | |
| 55. ESTIMATE OF YOUR WRITING SKILLS COMPARED TO MOST STUDENTS | | | |
| Above average | ___ | ___ | ___ |
| Average | ___ | ___ | ___ |
| Below average | ___ | ___ | ___ |
| 56. ESTIMATE OF YOUR READING COMPREHENSION ABILITY COMPARED TO MOST STUDENTS | | | |
| Above average | ___ | ___ | ___ |
| Average | ___ | ___ | ___ |
| Below average | ___ | ___ | ___ |
| 57. ESTIMATE OF YOUR MATH ABILITY COMPARED TO MOST STUDENTS | | | |
| Above average | ___ | ___ | ___ |
| Average | ___ | ___ | ___ |
| Below average | ___ | ___ | ___ |

IF YOU HAVE EVER TRANSFERRED FROM ONE COLLEGE TO ANOTHER:

What were your reasons for transferring? (If you have transferred more than once, answer with reference to the first time.)

1. Main reason: _____

2. Other reason(s): _____

IF YOU HAVE EVER DROPPED OUT OF COLLEGE (either temporarily or permanently):

What were your reasons for dropping out of college? (If you have dropped out more than once, please answer with reference to the first time.)

3. Main reason: _____

4. Other reason(s): _____

If you have dropped out of college, and are not currently enrolled, you do not need to continue. Please return the questionnaire in the envelope provided. Thank you for your time and your participation in this study!

IF YOU ARE CURRENTLY ENROLLED:

From the factors listed below, which ones could possibly cause you to transfer to a different college or to drop out of college altogether? (Check all that apply)

| Possible reasons for transferring | | Possible reasons for dropping out |
|---|---|---|
| 5.___ | . . . . Lack of money . . . . . | ___17. |
| 6.___ | . Risk of academic failure . . | ___18. |
| 7.___ | . . . Lack of interest . . . . | ___19. |
| 8.___ | Lack of progress toward . . . career objective . . . . | ___20. |
| 9.___ | . . . . Poor health . . . . . | ___21. |
| 10.___ | Personal or family problems . | ___22. |
| 11.___ | Desired program not available . | ___23 |
| 12.___ | Friends going to another . . . . . school . . . . . | ___24. |
| 13.___ | Another college having a better . program in my major field . . | ___25. |
| 14.___ | . To move farther from home . . | ___26. |
| 15.___ | . To move closer to home . . . | ___27. |

Other reasons (please specify)

16. For transferring: _____

28. For dropping out: _____

Name of college or university you are currently attending:

29, _____
30.

31. What is your current class status?

1.___Freshman 4.___Senior
2.___Sophomore 5.___Other
3.___Junior

32. Do you plan to complete your degree program at the institution you now attend?

1.___Yes 2.___No

Thank you very much for completing the survey.
Please return it in the enclosed envelope.

# APPENDIX B

## EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE
## COLLEGE BOARD WESTERN REGIONAL ASSEMBLY

### 1978-79

William A. Douglas, Chairman
Dean of Admissions & Records
University of Colorado
Boulder, CO 80302

Stephanie M. Adams
Associate Dean, Student Affairs
Coordinator, Relations with Schools
California State University & Colleges
Long Beach, CA 90802

Rebecca Barron
Assistant Dean of Students
Occidental College
Los Angeles, CA 90041

Sister Annette Bourret
Director of Admissions
University of San Diego
San Diego, CA 92110

Lawrence E. Braxton
Director of Financial Aid
Loyola Marymount University
Los Angeles, CA 90045

John I. Danielson
Director of Financial Aid
University of California, Berkeley
Berkeley, CA 94720

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The Colorado College
Colorado Springs, CO 80903

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University of the Pacific
Stockton, CA 95204

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Willamette University
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with Schools, Statewide
University of California
Berkeley, CA 94720

Kip Toner
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Seattle University
Seattle, WA 98122

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Shorecrest Senior High School
Seattle, WA 98155